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CHARACTER.

Most lovely of loving creatures
        Under the kindly skies
She seemeth, although no teachers
        Have made her clever or wise ;
And you see not her common features,
        Struck blind by the soul in her eyes.

HENRY W. AUSTIN.

NOTES.

THE frontispiece of this number is on the whole a fairly satisfactory example of the delicacy and the richness to be obtained in dry-point etching. Probably the most praiseworthy particular (besides its basis of admirable drawing) is, in this instance, the exquisite softness and daintiness of the outlines of the face. It is often said that outlines of the face and figure are relieved of all harshness by the structure of the skin and the minute hairs covering the surface of the human body, and Mr. Freer has achieved a genuine success by his observation and treatment of this fact.

As some of our readers may not fully understand the difference between a simple etching and a dry-point one, it may not be superfluous to explain briefly the processes. In a simple etching, a polished copper plate is covered with a ground of varnish specially prepared, and upon it the picture is drawn with an etching needle, which scratches through the varnish to the metal, leaving a complete drawing in the coating of varnish. This is then flooded with aquafortis, which bites into the copper only where the varnish is scratched away. When the fine lines become deep enough, the acid is poured off, and they are covered with varnish. The acid is repeatedly applied till all the lines are well bitten in, the heavy lines, of course,

getting the most. Any miscalculation of the strength of the acid or the time it may remain on will, of course, be fatal to success. Most etchings are afterward touched up with the dry point, but in the dry-point etching proper, no acid is used, the drawing being scratched directly upon and into the copper plate with the point. While the bite of acid produces a clean line in the plate, the cutting of the needle into the copper throws up a ridge of metal or "bur," which helps to hold the ink and adds softness and richness of effect. Some artists, while admitting the peculiar charm and value of the dry-point method, claim that the lines, on account of being rather V-shaped scratches in the plate than square-cut are liable to partially fill up in steel-facing, and thus mar the work. It does seem marvelous that the scratches will admit of steel-facing, when often they are so faint that a half-dozen impressions without steeling will suffice to destroy the plate.

THE practical importance of the Dieulafoy discoveries of the ruins of Susa, so fully described about a year ago in the French *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, and more recently in *Harper's Magazine* by Madame Dieulafoy herself, is emphasized by the suggestion in an English journal that the great frieze of enameled pottery or majolica which adorned the palace of Darius the